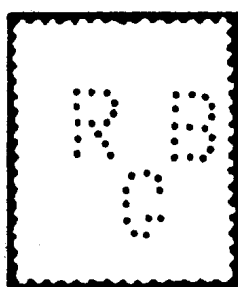


Anyone with a collection of Railway Perfins might consider adding a sub-section (if they haven't done so already) of perfins franked with the marks of Travelling Post Offices (TPOs), Sorting Carriages and the like. Mails have been carried by rail from the very early days of railway travel, for example the first "all- rail" mail from London to Sheffield took place on 16th June 1840 - coincidentally around the time of the introduction of the "Penny Post". Eventually, mail would not only be sorted "en-route" but would also be picked up and dropped off automatically at speed.

The illustrations of the cancellations in this article are based on those used by H S Wilson in his "History of the Travelling Post Offices of Great Britain". Published in three parts, this work is a must for 'TPO Cancel' enthusiasts.

While inspecting material for the "New Illustrated Catalogue" I came across four such cancellations. One was the frequently encountered cancel of the "Glasgow & Carlisle Sorting Tender", but the other three I thought were unusual and worthy of note. The euphoria, however, was short lived as Tony Cornforth pointed out that there are over 1,000 such cancellations, with dated marks appearing from around 1869 - coincidently from around the time of Sloper's introduction of 'perforated postage stamps'.

1895-1900

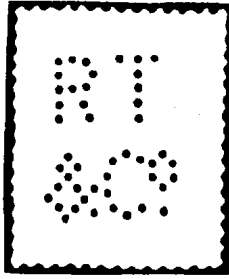


R0487.03



Thirty-one different cancellations are known for the various Glasgow & Carlisle Sorting Tenders, Carriages & TPOs, some of which were combined with the Glasgow Duplex '159'. The example noted on RB/G (R0487.03) and dated 28 Oct 1897 is typical of the late Victorian era having been introduced in April 1892.

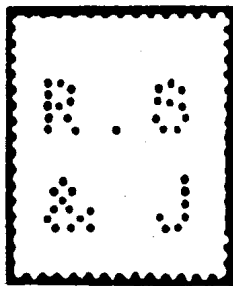
1895-1895



R5243.02

Still in existence today is the "Midland T.P.O" running between Bristol and Newcastle, but it began life way back in 1845 as the "Rugby & Newcastle R.P.O". Twenty-five cancels are recorded by H S Wilson,, one of which was issued in May 1880 and matches that noted on RT/&C^o. (R5243.02) and dated 27 June 1893.

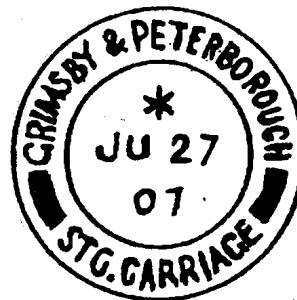
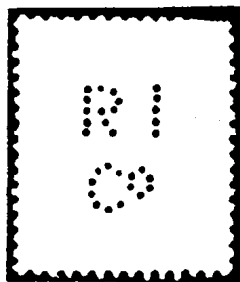
1895-1953



R4770.01M

The "Ipswich Sorting Tender", established in 1872, transported mails to/from (i.e. UP/DOWN) London. The cancel found on R.S/&J (R4770.01M) dated 11 Nov 1903 is known used between 1903-1907. The service ceased in 1929 when it was transferred to Norwich.

1885-1910



R2800.03

Finally, this "Grimsby & Peterborough Sorting Carriage" cancel was found on a pair of King Edward VII Id's, dated 27 June 1907. Although the roster was introduced on 1st April 1900, this particular cancel was first used in 1905. Unfortunately, it became damaged/lost and was replaced in 1910 by one with taller letters. The service was discontinued at the end of March 1917.